

**IDAHO COUNCIL ON CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH  
RECOMMENDATION #34**

**Recommendation 34.**

**The Cabinet Council should lead an effort to expand services aimed at early identification and treatment for the needs among younger children before those needs escalate to the level of "severe" disturbances. (Priority 2)**

- A** By May 1, 2002, the ICCMH will establish an early identification workgroup consisting of child care providers, pediatricians, infant toddler staff and a council member, school districts, parent advocacy, Head Start, and local council members to identify an age appropriate assessment tool and develop assessment methods that can aid in the accurate identification of young children with developing SED symptoms. In addition, this workgroup should identify appropriate treatment methods and additional programming options for this age group.
- B** By December 1, 2002, DHW will conduct outreach and offer training to community resource workers, child care providers, pediatricians and other health care providers throughout the state on the use of the tool to identify children who may need further mental health evaluation, a referral process for accessing DHW children's mental health services, and community treatment options for this age group. The early identification workgroup should identify additional groups to be trained by DHW who may benefit from this training.
- F** Once appropriate treatment methods and programming options have been identified, recommendations will be developed and provided to the ICCMH.

**Background:** The workgroup researched and discussed numerous tools used to identify developmental issues for children from birth to 9 years of age. A chart was developed to display the essential components of each of the tools. It is not an all inclusive chart. It represents tools that members were most familiar with or where information about the tool was available.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1) State Department of Education and the Department of Health and Welfare, as represented by the Children's Mental Health program and the Infant and Toddler program, will develop a training curriculum on early identification screening and resources. The target audience for this training will be geared towards the general public, primarily day care providers, parents, physicians, school personnel, DHW staff, and private providers. Due date for curriculum and first training October 2003. Resources and treatment options will be part of this curriculum.
- 2) The Department of Health and Welfare will identify at least one clinician in every region that will develop expertise in the area of early childhood development, assessment, diagnosis, and treatment. In addition, the Department will provide specific training on one of the tools that provides assessment, diagnosis, and treatment to the clinicians as well as other interested professionals in the schools and the private mental health sector. This training will build upon the training provided in #1.